

OVERTURNING INEFFICIENT LOCAL ZONING RULES

THE ISSUE

Many local and state governments have adopted zoning laws that inhibit home construction and drive up costs. Inefficient land use policies make it harder and more expensive to build.

THE SOLUTION

Localities need to rework their zoning plans to increase density and allow more flexibility for developers.

NAHB supports ideas such as:

- Reducing minimum lot sizes, floor area ratio requirements and parking requirements,
- Promoting accessory dwelling unit construction,
- Streamlining and improving the permitting and approval processes,
- Minimizing parking requirements, and
- Legalizing missing middle housing construction (e.g., duplexes, townhomes, bungalow courts).

Reforming local zoning codes, land use policy mechanisms and the permitting process can help increase the number of units built and provide units at a wide variety of price points. Allowing a broader diversity of housing types not only lends itself to an affordable market, but also provides housing of need to all different family types.

In addition, localities should consider a range of housing options, including:

- Implementing by-right zoning for needed attainable and affordable housing;
- Mandating objective-based design standards, and providing clear approval criteria;
- Strategically planning housing growth around existing transit or other public infrastructure; and
- Promoting housing development on underutilized land such as government-owned land, adaptive reuse, and infill redevelopment.

Accommodating these ideas can increase supply and lower overall housing costs.